

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
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AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

C O N F I D E N T I A L GEORGETOWN 1022

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ELAB, GY
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT, GENERAL SECRETARY OF GUYANA TRADES UNION
CONGRESS TO ATTEND WFTU MEETING

REF: (A) STATE -1200, (B) GEORGETOWN A-15

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH EMB LABOR OFF APRIL 4 PRESIDENT OF THE GUYANA TRADES UNION CONGRESS (TUC) BASIL BLAIR REVEALED THAT HE AND JOSEPH POLLYDORE, THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE TUC, WOULD BE ATTENDING THE WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNION (WFTU) CONGRESS TO BE HELD IN PRAGUE LATER IN APRIL. TRAVEL PLANS OF THE TWO LABOR LEADERS HAVE NOT YET BEEN FINALIZED BUT BLAIR SAID THAT HE EXPECTED TO LEAVE GUYANA ON APRIL 14.

2. BLAIR STATED THAT HE EXPECTED THAT INTERNATIONAL ISSUES WOULD BE PRINCIPAL CONCERN OF THE WFTU CONGRESS. HE SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED SOUTHERN AFRICA, THE NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER (NIEO), LATIN AMERICA, AND THE MIDDLE EAST AS LIKELY TOPICS OF DISCUSSION.
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BLAIR STRESSED THAT THE TWO GUYANESE LABOR LEADERS WERE GOING IN A PRIVATE CAPACITY RATHER THAN AS OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE TUC. BLAIR HAD BEEN INVITED AS A SPECIAL GUEST OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE WFTU WHILE POLLYDORE HAD BEEN INVITED BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE ORGANIZATION (JUAN CAMPOS OF CUBA). THE TUC WAS ENGAGING IN A POLICY OF MAINTAINING CLOSE RELATION-

SHIPS WITH BOTH WESTERN AND "SOCIALIST" INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATIONS ACCORDING TO BLAIR. THIS POSITION WAS IN KEEPING WITH THE GOG POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT, DECLARED THE TUC PRESIDENT. HE SAID IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE FOR CARIBBEAN LABOR ORGANIZATIONS TO BRIDGE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE WFTU AND THE DEMOCRATIC INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS. (ICFTU).

3. COMMENT: BLAIR HAS A REPUTATION FOR BEING NAIVE ABOUT THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF SOME OF THE COMMUNIST COUNTRIES. HE IS ALSO EASILY INFLUENCED BY HIS MENTOR PRIME MINISTER FORBES BURNHAM. WHILE NOT IDEOLOGICALLY COMMITTED TO COMMUNISM, IT IS ALWAYS POSSIBLE THAT HE WILL GET CARRIED AWAY AT THE WFTU CONGRESS AND ENTER ENTHUSIASTICALLY INTO THE COMRADELY SPIRIT OF THE AFFAIR.
BURKE

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